GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:329
ANSWERED ON:23.12.2004
COMMUNITY RADIO
Mahtab Shri Bhartruhari;Pathak Shri Brajesh

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telecom Authority of India in a consultation paper on community radio, which was issued in the month of August 2004, points out that 20 months after the community radio policy was announced, there`s just one licensee in the country;

(b) if so, whether complex licensing procedure is a hurdle to several potential players from at least six Ministries/Departments;

(c) whether this policy was announced in December 2002 and only 55 applications were made and only 12 have been issued letters of intent, till date;

(d) if so, the other points mentioned in the consultation paper on community radio circulated by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India; and

(e) the steps the Government proposes to take to simplify the community radio license process so that the scheme can be implemented in all over the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING AND CULTURE (SHRI S.JAIPAL REDDY)

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.329 FOR 23.12.2004

The policy & procedure for the grant of licenses for Community Radio Stations were approved by the Union Cabinet on 18th December 2002 and the notice inviting applications was published in the leading News Papers of the country in the first week of February 2003. Till date, 60 applications have been received, 28 Letters of Intent have been issued and 15 institutions have signed License Agreements with us after allocation of frequency by Ministry of Communication.

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India had raised several issues in its consultation paper in August 2004. TRAI has since finalized its report and submitted this to the Ministry.

Clearances from the Ministries of External Affairs and Defence have been dispensed with and now the clearances are required from three Ministries viz. Home Affairs, Human Resource Development and Communication. Efforts are being made to get the process of SACFA clearance and issue of Wireless Operating License expedited from the Ministry of Communication, so that who have signed License Agreements with Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, could commission their service at the earliest.